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20		ES DISTRICT COURT RICT OF CALIFORNIA				
21	HIGHLAND FIFTH-ORANGE	Case No. 8:12-cv-01070-PL-PLA				
22	PARTNERS, LLC, a California Limited Liability Company,					
	3 1 37					
23	Plaintiff,					
24	VS.					
25	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and					
26	U.S. DEPT. OF INTERIOR, B.L.M.					
27	Defendants.					
28						

CONSENT DECREE

This Consent Decree is made, as of the Effective Date of this Consent Decree as defined in Paragraph 4 below, between Highland Fifth-Orange Partners, LLC ("HFO") and the United States of America ("United States"), collectively referred to as "the Parties" as defined herein.

WHEREAS, HFO filed suit against the United States and the United States Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management ("BLM") pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9601-9675, as amended (hereinafter "CERCLA"), the Federal Tort Claims Act ("FTCA"), 28 U.S.C. § 2671 et seq., and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 ("RCRA"), 42 U.S.C. § 6701 et seq., seeking, *inter alia*, to recover certain costs it incurred in response to the release or threatened release of hazardous substances at the Site (as defined further below), in the matter of <u>Highland Fifth-Orange, LLC v. United States of America</u>, No. 8:12-cv-01070 (C.D. Cal.);

WHEREAS, the Parties desire to enter into this Consent Decree to have a full and final resolution of any and all claims that were asserted in the aforementioned suit, or could now or hereafter be asserted against the United States in connection with the Site, and to avoid the complication and expense of litigating such claims;

WHEREAS, HFO has entered into an agreement with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control ("DTSC") under the California Land Reuse and Revitalization Act of 2004 for the purpose of completing an assessment and remediation of the Site.

WHEREAS, the Parties agree that this Consent Decree is fair, reasonable and in the public interest; and

WHEREAS, the United States and HFO enter into this Consent Decree as a final settlement of all claims in connection with the Site and do not admit any liability arising from occurrences or transactions pertaining to the Site;

NOW THEREFORE, before the taking of testimony, without trial or determination of any issue of fact or law, and upon the consent of the parties, it is hereby ordered, adjudged and decreed that:

1. The Parties. The Parties to this Consent Decree are HFO and the United States.

- 2. <u>Jurisdiction</u>. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this case pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331, and 42 U.S.C. §§ 9607 and 9613(b). Solely for the purposes of this Consent Decree, the Parties waive any and all objections and defenses that they may have to jurisdiction of the Court and to venue in this District. The Parties shall not challenge the terms of this Consent Decree or this Court's jurisdiction to enter and enforce this Consent Decree.
- 3. Application of this Consent Decree. This Consent Decree applies to, is binding upon, and inures to the benefit of HFO (and its successors, assigns, and designees) and the United States (and its assigns and designees). Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Consent Decree does not extend to or inure to the benefit of any party, person, or entity other than HFO and the United States, and nothing in this Consent Decree shall be construed to make any other party, person, or entity a third-party beneficiary of this Consent Decree. Furthermore, nothing in this Consent Decree is intended to be, nor shall be construed as, a waiver, release, or covenant not to sue for any claim or cause of action, administrative or judicial, in law or in equity, that the United States or HFO may have against any person, firm, partnership, trust, corporation or any other entity that is not a party to this Consent Decree.
- 4. <u>Definitions</u>. Unless expressly provided in this Consent Decree, terms used in this Consent Decree that are defined in CERCLA or in regulations promulgated under CERCLA shall have the meanings assigned to them in CERCLA or in such regulations. For the terms listed below, the following definitions shall apply solely for the purposes of this Consent Decree:

<u>CLRRA Agreement</u>. "CLRRA Agreement" means the agreement dated February 11, 2011 between DTSC and HFO under the California Land Reuse and Revitalization Act of 2004 relating to the Site.

Contamination. "Contamination" means any hazardous substance within the meaning of section 101(14) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9601(14), hazardous waste or solid waste within the meaning of section 1004 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 6903(5) and 6903 (27) including, but not limited to, the presence of lead shot, lead, arsenic, antimony, and nickel.

<u>Cost Statement</u>: "Cost Statement" means a statement documenting Response Costs incurred by HFO to which is attached reasonably sufficient documentation to allow verification of

1	the accuracy of the Response Costs claimed, that such Response Costs were properly incurred and
2	consistent with Section 107(a)(4)(B) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. §9607(a)(4)(B), and that such
3	Response Costs included in the statement were actually paid. A Cost Statement shall be in
4	substantially the form of and contain supporting documents such as are included in Exhibit A
5	hereto.
6	Covered Matters. "Covered Matters" means any and all past or future claims that have
7	been, could now be, or hereafter could be asserted by HFO against the United States arising out of
8	or in connection with Contamination at the Site.
9	<u>DTSC</u> . "DTSC" means the California Department of Toxic Substances and Control.
10	DTSC Oversight Costs. "DTSC Oversight Costs" means costs incurred by HFO for
11	DTSC's oversight of work conducted under the CLRRA Agreement, as set forth in section 6.2 of
12	the CLRRA Agreement.
13	Effective Date. "Effective date" shall mean the date upon which this Consent Decree is
14	entered by the Court as recorded on the Court docket, or, if the Court instead issues an order
15	approving the Consent Decree, the date such order is recorded on the Court docket.
16	HFO. "HFO" means Highland Fifth-Orange Partners, LLC, a California limited liability
17	company.
18	Future Response Costs. "Future Response Costs" means any Response Costs incurred by
19	HFO after February 5, 2013. Future Response Costs may include the costs to develop and
20	implement a "Site Assessment Plan" (as defined in section 5.2 of the CLRRA Agreement) and a
21	"Response Plan" (as defined in section 5.3 of the CLRRA Agreement) and DTSC Oversight
22	Costs, to the extent those costs are necessary and consistent with the National Contingency Plan.
23	Past Response Costs. "Past Response Costs" means any Response Costs incurred by HFO
24	on or before February 5, 2013.
25	Response Costs. "Response Costs" means the necessary costs of response within the
26	meaning of section 107(a)(4)(B) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9607(a)(4)(B), incurred by HFO to
27	investigate, clean up, or otherwise investigate Contamination at the Site. Save as authorized or
28	provided in case law, attorneys' fees or litigation-related costs may not be claimed as Response

Costs.

The Site. The "Site" means the parcel of property described in the Complaint in <u>Highland</u> Fifth-Orange, LLC v. United States of America, No. 8:12-cv-01070 (C.D. Cal.), with a legal description as follows:

THAT PORTION OF THE WEST ½ OF THE SOUTHEAST ¼ OF SECTION 3,
TOWNSHIP 1 SOUTH RANGE 3 WEST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, IN
THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, LYING SOUTH OF
THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED LINE:

COMMENCING AT A POINT NORTH 0° 6' EAST 734 FEET FRIM THE SOUTH ¼ CORNER OF SAID SECTION, BEING THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING OF SAID LINE; THENCE NORTH 88° 23' EAST A DISTANCE OF 1119.95 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89° 47 EAST, A DISTANCE OF 1521.35 FEET TO A POINT ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID SECTION, SAID POINT BEING 785.3 FEET NORTH OF THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID SECTION.

<u>United States</u>. "United States" means the United States of America and all of its departments, agencies, components, and instrumentalities, including, without limitation, BLM.

- 5. Release and Covenant Not To Sue by HFO. As of the Effective Date of this Consent Decree, HFO hereby forever releases, discharges, and covenants and agrees not to assert (by way of the commencement of an action, the joinder of the United States in an existing action or in any other fashion) any and all claims, causes of action, suits or demands of any kind whatsoever in law or in equity which it may have had, or hereafter have, including, but not limited to, claims under CERCLA sections 107 and 113, the Federal Tort Claims Act, and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 against the United States arising out of or in connection with Contamination at the Site.
- 6. <u>Indemnification by HFO</u>. HFO further agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States against any and all past or future claims asserted against the United States by any other entity arising out of or in connection with Contamination at the Site provided that this indemnification and hold harmless shall immediately terminate and be null and void upon

notification to the United States that HFO has received a certificate of completion from DTSC as provided in the California Land Reuse and Revitalization Act of 2004 (Cal. Health & Safety Code section 25395.97) and in its agreement with DTSC.

7. Protection Against Claims.

a. The Parties acknowledge and agree that the payment to be made by the United States pursuant to this Consent Decree represents a good faith compromise of disputed claims and that the compromise represents a fair, reasonable, and equitable resolution of HFO's claims regarding Covered Matters. With regard to any Covered Matters, the Parties agree that the United States is entitled to, as of the effective date of this Consent Decree, contribution protection pursuant to section 113(f) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9613(f), the Uniform Comparative Fault Act, and any other applicable provision of federal or state law, whether by statute or common law, extinguishing the United States' liability to persons not party to this Consent Decree. Any rights the United States may have to obtain contribution or otherwise recover costs or damages from persons not party to this Consent Decree are preserved.

8. Payment of Past Response Costs.

- a. Within a reasonable time after the Effective Date of this Consent Decree, the United States will pay \$128,577.30 to HFO as reimbursement for HFO's Past Response Costs. Payment of the Past Response Costs shall be made by Electronic Funds Transfer in accordance with instructions provided by HFO.
- b. If such payment is not made in full within ninety (90) days after either the Effective Date of this Consent Decree, or the date upon which HFO provides the United States with payment instructions, whichever is later, then interest on the unpaid balance of the Past Response Costs shall be paid commencing on the 91st day after such later date. Interest shall accrue at the rate specified for interest on investments of the Hazardous Substance Superfund established under subchapter A of chapter 98 of Title 26 of the United States Code.

9. Payment of Future Response Costs; Initial Payment.

a. The parties agree that the United States shall pay 90 percent and HFO shall pay 10 percent of Future Response Costs.

- c. If the Initial Payment is not made in full within ninety (90) days after either the Effective Date of this Consent Decree, or the date upon which HFO provides the United States with payment instructions, whichever is later, then interest on the unpaid balance of the Initial Payment shall be paid commencing on the 91st day after such later date. Interest shall accrue at the rate specified for interest on investments of the Hazardous Substance Superfund established under subchapter A of chapter 98 of Title 26 of the United States Code.
- d. Beginning the first day of the month commencing the second month after HFO first incurs Future Response Costs and every two months thereafter until HFO has incurred a total of at least \$800,000 in Future Response Costs, HFO shall submit a Cost Statement. HFO shall also submit with the Cost Statement a summary that contains the following: the total of all Future Response Costs previously submitted by Cost Statement, the total of Future Response Costs that have not been objected to by the United States, and the amount of Future Response Costs remaining to be incurred by HFO in order to reach a total of \$800,000 in Future Response Costs (\$800,000 less the Future Response Costs to which the United States has not objected) ("Summary Response Cost Statement"). HFO shall continue to submit Cost Statements and Summary Response Cost Statements under this sub-paragraph until the total of the Future Response Costs to which the United States has not objected, as documented by the last Summary Response Cost Statement submitted to the United States, is equal to or greater than \$800,000.
 - 10. Payment of Future Response Costs After the Initial Payment
- a. After HFO has incurred a total of \$800,000 in Future Response Costs to which the United States has not objected (including Future Response Costs where any objection by the

- b. Starting the month in which HFO incurs Future Response Costs beyond the Initial Payment Limit ("Post-Initial Payment Limit"), HFO shall submit a Cost Statement to the United States every six (6) months thereafter, billing for the preceding six (6) months of Future Response Costs incurred beyond the Initial Payment Limit.
- c. If the United States does not object to the Post-Initial Payment Limit Cost
 Statement or Future Response Costs contained therein as provided in Subparagraph 11(a) of this
 Consent Decree, the Future Response Costs contained in the Post-Initial Payment Limit Cost
 Statement shall be deemed approved for payment of the United States' 90% share. In that event,
 payment will be due to HFO within sixty (60) days of receipt of a Cost Statement from HFO.

11. Objections to Response Costs; Dispute Resolution.

- a. The United States may, in good faith, object in writing to a Cost Statement or the Response Costs contained therein within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Cost Statement. Any such written objection shall identify the contested Cost Statement or the Response Costs objected to and the specific basis for the objection, and shall be transmitted to HFO. In the event of an objection to a Post-Initial Payment Cost Statement, the United States shall, within thirty (30) days of transmitting the written objection, reimburse HFO for the United States' share of any uncontested Cost Statement or uncontested Response Costs that are identified on a Post-Initial Payment Cost Statement. If such payment for an uncontested Post-Initial Payment Cost Statement or uncontested Response Costs contained therein is not made in full within thirty (30) days after expiration of the thirty (30) day review period, then interest on the unpaid balance for uncontested Response Costs shall accrue at the rate specified for interest on investments of the Hazardous Substance Superfund established under subchapter A of chapter 98 of Title 26 of the United States Code.
 - b. In the event the United States objects to any Cost Statement or Future

- c. If the Court, through the dispute resolution process outlined in Sub-Paragraph 11(b) of this Consent Decree, issues a final determination that the United States owes all or a portion of the contested Post-Initial Payment Limit Cost Statement or Response Costs contained therein, then the United States shall, as soon as such determination becomes final and non-appealable, pay the amount of the contested Post-Initial Payment Limit Cost Statement or Response Cost contained therein determined to be owing and shall pay interest on the unpaid balance of such contested Cost Statement or Response Cost from the date the Cost Statement or Response Cost was due to HFO but for the written objection, and interest shall continue to accrue on the unpaid balance until paid in full. Such interest shall accrue at the rate specified for interest on investments of the Hazardous Substance Superfund established under subchapter A of chapter 98 of Title 26 of the United States Code.
- 12. <u>Subject to Anti-Deficiency Act</u>. All payments to be made by the United States under this Consent Decree are subject to the availability of funds appropriated for such purpose. No provision of this Consent Decree shall be interpreted as or constitute a commitment or

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27 28 requirement that the United States obligate or pay funds in contravention of the Anti-Deficiency Act, 31 U.S.C. § 1341, or any other applicable provision of law.

- Covenant Not to Sue by the <u>United States and Reservation</u>. The United States 13. hereby releases and covenants not to sue HFO for Covered Matters, except that the United States of America specifically reserves its right to assert against HFO any claims or actions regarding the Site brought on behalf of the United States Environmental Protection Agency or a natural resource trustee. Nothing in this Consent Decree shall constitute or be construed as a waiver, limitation, or release of any claims or causes of action by the United States to enforce any federal laws or regulations in connection with the Site.
 - 14. Effect of Entry of Consent Decree.
- a. This Consent Decree was negotiated and executed by HFO and the United States in good faith and at arm's length and is a fair and equitable compromise of claims, which were vigorously contested. This Consent Decree shall not constitute or be construed as an admission of liability by the United States or HFO. Nor is it an admission or denial of any factual allegations or an admission of violation of any law, rule, regulation, or policy by any of the Parties to this Consent Decree.
- b. Upon the Effective Date, this Consent Decree shall constitute a final judgment between HFO and the United States.
- 15. HFO's Certification As to Recovery of Past and Future Response Costs. HFO certifies, based on its knowledge and belief and subject to the penalties of the False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. § 3729 et seq., and other applicable law, that as of the Effective Date of this Consent Decree, HFO has not been reimbursed for any Response Costs relating to the Site, aside from any reimbursement provided by the settlement agreement between Enviro Compliance Solutions and HFO relating to the Site. HFO shall not seek or accept reimbursement or payment of any Past or Future Response Costs in connection with any existing or future federal government contracts, grants or other agreements.
- No Admission of Liability. The United States and HFO agree that this Consent 16. Decree, including any payments made pursuant to it and the negotiations and other

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communications related to it, is entered into without any admission of liability for any purpose as to any matter arising out of the transactions or occurrences related to this Consent Decree or alleged in Highland Fifth-Orange, LLC v. United States of America, No. 8:12-cv-01070 (C.D. Cal.).

- 17. No Use As Evidence. This Consent Decree represents the compromise of disputed claims and nothing in this Consent Decree is intended to be, or shall be construed as, an admission or resolution of any question of fact or law with respect to any liability or responsibility for the Site. This Consent Decree shall not be admissible in any proceeding other than in (1) an action where the United States seeks to demonstrate that it is entitled to contribution protection pursuant to Paragraph 7 of this Consent Decree or (2) dispute resolution pursuant to Paragraph 11(b) of this Consent Decree.
- 18. Conflicts of Law. This Consent Decree shall be governed and construed under the laws of the United States.
- 19. Severability. If any provision of this Consent Decree is deemed invalid or unenforceable, the balance of this Consent Decree shall remain in full force and effect.
- 20. Headings. Any paragraph headings or section titles to this Consent Decree are provided solely as a matter of convenience and shall not be construed to alter the meaning of any paragraph or provision of this Consent Decree.
- 21. Original Counterparts. This Consent Decree may be executed in any number of original counterparts, each of which shall be deemed to constitute one agreement. The execution of one counterpart by any party shall have the same force and effect as if that party had signed all other counterparts.
- 22. Integration Provision. This Consent Decree constitutes the entire Consent Decree between HFO and the United States with respect to matters covered herein. All prior discussions, drafts and writings are specifically superseded by this Consent Decree and may not be used to vary or contest the terms of this Consent Decree.
- 23. Notice. Whenever, under the terms of the Consent Decree, written notice is required to be given or a report or other document is required to be sent by one Party to another, it

1	United States Department of the Interior			
2	2800 Cottage Way, Suite E-1712 Sacramento, California 95852			
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4	24. <u>Representative Authority</u> . The individuals signing this Consent Decree on behalf			
5	of the United States and HFO hereby certify that each is authorized to bind legally his or her			
6	respective party to this Consent Decree. Any change in ownership, corporate or other legal statu			
7	of any party to this Consent Decree, including, but not limited to, transfer of assets or real or			
8	personal property, shall in no way alter the status of responsibilities of any of the Parties under			
9	this Consent Decree.			
10	25. <u>Modification</u> . Material modifications to this Consent Decree shall be in writing,			
11	signed by the United States and HFO, and shall be effective upon approval by the Court. If the			
12	parties mutually agree, in writing, that a modification is non-material, such non-material			
13	modifications shall be in writing and shall be effective when signed by duly authorized			
14	representatives of the United States and Plaintiffs.			
15	IT IC CO ODDEDED			
16	IT IS SO ORDERED.			
17	The Clerk shall enter final judgment in accordance with the terms of this Consent Decree,			
18	SIGNED and ENTERED this 21st day of April 2013.			
19	They alex			
20	The Honorable Percy Anderson			
21	UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE			
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2	For the United States:		
3	For the Officed States.		
4	9		IGNACIA S. MORENO Assistant Attorney General
5			Environment and Natural Resources Division
6	Date: 4/1/13		Hy.
7	Date.		
8			Kim Smaczniak
9			Trial Attorney United States Department of Justice
10			Environment and Natural Resources Division Environmental Defense Section
11			P.O. Box 7611 Washington D.C. 20004
12			washington D.C. 2000+
13	Date:		
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